

Field hospitals

Capability gap

Field Hospitals are among the most valuable contributions members can make to multinational missions. A vital prerequisite for any deployment, they are also incredibly flexible, and can be deployed to a whole range of missions. Improvements in training and equipment mean that now, even in the toughest environment, a single Field Hospital can save many lives.

However, a properly outfitted field hospital requires much expensive equipment, and few Member States can supply the doctors and nurses experienced with trauma cases who are at the core of the hospital's work.



Multinational Modular Medical Unit

Fourteen Member States are therefore coming together, facilitated by the EDA, to build the Modular Multinational Medical Unit.

This will provide a highly flexible modular field hospital, complete with top-of-the-range equipment and highly trained medical personnel, drawn from across Europe. The hospital will be equipped with protected ambulances, MEDEVAC helicopters, and all the surgical and care units associated with a modern hospital, from psychiatry to CT scans.

At the same time, formal agreements on sharing this resource between Member States will be established, cutting back obstructive regulation.

The field hospital can then be deployed to a range of military missions, from international peacekeeping to humanitarian assistance, providing everything from vaccinations to emergency surgery, saving the lives of soldiers and civilians alike.

Such multinational efforts in medical support have previously only been ad hoc for major operations.

The project so far

Initiated by Italy – which has considerable experience in this field – in May 2011, a clear road map was provided by September 2011. The project swiftly gathered momentum and buy-in from 14 Member States (AT, BE, CY, CZ, DE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HU, IT, NL, RO, SI).

A Declaration of Intent was signed by ministers at the EDA's Steering Board in March 2012, confirming political commitment to this project, well ahead of schedule.

In 2012 and 2013, work begins on identifying common standards and preparing training facilities, with the aim of opening of the Pre-Deployment Training Center and Procurement Phase by 2014.

Close partnerships have been formed with the Military Medicine Centre of Excellence in Budapest, Hungary, and with other multinational organizations, ensuring that the project avoids duplication and delivers best practice and value for money for European taxpayers.

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At a glance

- Highly flexible, modular arrangement.
- Trained personnel, top-of-the-range equipment.
- All the resources of a modern hospital, in the most challenging environments.
- Formal agreements on use.
- 13 Participating Member States.
- Initiated by Italy.
- Ahead of schedule.
- Deployable by 2014.
- Avoiding duplication, building on best practice.